

CONSERVATION COMMISSION REPORT

(Here is the official report of the Duxbury Conservation Commission. -- Ed.)

As a result of the 2 1/2-hour hearing held last Thursday evening to discuss the acquisition of the Duxbury portion of the Bay Farm, the Conservation Commission believes that the following points will be of interest to the voters:

1. Two independent appraisers, whose appraisals have been submitted with the application for Self-Help, have valued the property at \$215,000 and \$245,000. These evaluations were made with one acre withheld. Since then the owners have included the one acre in the sale, thus raising the appraisal value. It is evident that the sale price is realistic and reflects the actual value.

2. The Department of Natural Resources, which administers the Self-Help Fund, makes it clear that they will leave the regulation and administration of land purchased with their funds entirely up to the Conservation Commissions, with the understanding that whatever regulations are promulgated will bear equally on all the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Joel Lerner, Land Use Administrator, who spoke on this point, stressed that the Commissions run these properties. In the event that the town wished at some future date to change the use for which the land was purchased, it could do so with a 2/3 vote at Town Meeting and the concurrence of the Conservation Commission.

3. Project approval will not be forthcoming until the end of March. The fact that the Commission will be unable to come to Town Meeting to state exactly the amount of support that the State will provide undoubtedly will have a direct bearing on the wording of the motion. It is anticipated that some conditions will be attached to the vote. Example: The town will vote to appropriate \$200,000 for the purchase of the Duxbury portion of Bay Farm, on the condition that State Self-Help Program provide at least \$80,000 (40%), and that the balance be paid for in the form of a bond issue. The Finance Committee calculates that if the State were to provide the maximum help (50%), the remaining \$100,000 would cost 35¢ on the tax dollar over a ten-year loan.

4. The Commission will not seek Federal help for two reasons: a) the State Legislature has not complied with certain Federal requirements which explains why no Federal money has been spent in Massachusetts, b) The two Federal programs (HUD and BOR) appear to be more restrictive, contain very specific penalty clauses, and are directed towards more urban areas.

5. The Planning Board views the acquisition of Bay Farm as an asset to the town.

6. In the matter of potential building lots on the property, the owners, who are well qualified to speak on real estate matters, have always estimated that there are 35 lots on this property.

Concerning drainage, it is well established that no construction problem exists that cannot be solved on this property, by either more expensive individual leaching beds, or a communal leaching system. 7. The term Conservation implies intelligent and vigorous recreational usage of land in its natural state without development or construction of additional facilities. The land is there to be used, by you, your children and future generations who may never know what an open space is unless you now have the foresight to set some aside for them.

Every year the Home Buildings Association sends up their bills to restrict residential zoning to 13,000 square feet. Already one of the foremost promoters of this bill has begun developing in Duxbury. Possibly the day will come when the population pressure will demand such a measure to provide home sites. Think then what the value of an open space will be, not in terms of dollars, but in terms of the QUALITY of the conditions under which people will be living.

If Duxbury does not acquire this property now it will all be academic whether the price is high, for it won't be available and you won't have to ask whether the land is suitable to build upon, for you won't be able to see the ocean from the houses.

DUXBURY CLIPPER

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